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PATENT

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of

Alfred T. TABAYOYON, JR. et al

Art Unit: 2143

Application No: 09/974,624

Examiner:
Joseph E. Avellino

Filed: October 9, 2001

For: NETWORK-BASED DOCUMENT DELIVERY
SYSTEM WITH RECEIPT AND DISPLAY
VERIFICATION

TRANSMITTAL OF BRIEF ON BEHALF OF APPELLANT

COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450

Sir:

Notice of Appeal was filed in this case on September 6,
2005.

Submitted herewith in triplicate is Appellant's Brief.

A check in the amount of \$250 for the fee under 37 CFR
41.20(b)(2) (small entity) is also enclosed.

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Respectfully submitted,

Daniel J. Bedell
Reg. No. 30,156

SMITH-HILL & BEDELL, P.C.
16100 N.W. Cornell Road, Suite 220
Beaverton, Oregon 97006

Tel. (503) 574-3100
Fax (503) 574-3197
Docket: SWIF 2123
Postcard: 11/05-1

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WITH RECEIPT AND DISPLAY VERIFICATION

BRIEF ON BEHALF OF APPELLANT

COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450

Sir:

REAL PARTY IN INTEREST

Swiftview, Inc.

RELATED APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES

None

STATUS OF CLAIMS

All claims 1-22 are rejected, no claims are withdrawn.

STATUS OF AMENDMENTS

No amendment was filed subsequent to final rejection.

SUMMARY OF CLAIMED SUBJECT MATTER

Claim 1

Referring to drawings and specification the invention as recited in claim 1 is a method for transmitting a document file describing a document from a sender computer to a receiver computer via a computer network linking the sender computer and the receiver computer to a server computer, wherein the sender computer is operated by a sender. The method comprises the steps of

a. transmitting the document file (print file 37, FIG. 1) from the sender computer to the server computer via the computer network (paragraph 25, lines 7 and 8),

b. transmitting the document file from the server computer to the receiver computer via the computer network (paragraph 25, lines 13 and 14), and

c. providing viewer software (viewer 44 within browser 26, FIG. 1) executed by the receiver computer for generating a display of an image of the document described by the document file when received by the receiver computer (paragraph 5, lines 14-16), and for thereafter automatically returning verification data to the server computer via the computer network verifying that the receiver computer has successfully displayed the document image (paragraph 34, lines 1-13).

Claim 14

Referring to the drawings and specification, the invention as recited in claim 14 is a method for transmitting a document file describing a document from a sender computer to a receiver computer via a computer network linking the sender computer and the receiver computer to a server computer, wherein the sender computer is operated by a sender, wherein the receiver computer is operated by a receiver, wherein the receiver computer includes a monitor viewable by the receiver. The method comprises the steps of:

a. transmitting the document file (print file 37, FIG. 1) via the computer network from the sender computer to the server computer (paragraph 25, lines 7 and 8);

b. storing the document file on the server computer and assigning the document file a unique network address (paragraph 29, lines 1 and 2);

c. transmitting an email message via the computer network to the receiver computer, wherein the email message includes a hypertext link to the document file's assigned network address (paragraph 29, lines 1-14);

d. displaying the email message on the receiver computer monitor so that the receiver may view it and activate the hypertext link (paragraph 29, lines 12-18) whereby the receiver computer returns the document file's network address to the server computer (paragraph 30, lines 4-6);

e. transmitting the document file from the server computer to the receiver computer via the computer network following the receiver's activation of the hypertext link (paragraph 25, lines 13 and 14); and

f. providing viewer software (viewer 44 within browser 26, Fig. 1) running on the receiver computer for generating a display on the receiver computer monitor of the document described by the document file when received by the receiver computer (paragraph 34, lines 4-9); wherein when the viewer software has successfully displayed the document, it automatically returns verification data in the form of an encoded network address to the server computer via the computer network verifying that the document has been successfully displayed (paragraph 34, lines 4-14).

GROUND FOR REJECTION TO BE REVIEWED ON APPEAL

Grounds for rejection to be reviewed on appeal are:

whether claims 1-2, 4-8, 13-17 and 21 should be rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,789,105 (McMillan),

whether claims 9, 10 and 20 should be rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over McMillan in view of U.S. Patent 6,209,030 (Ohashi),

whether claims 11, 12, 18 and 19 should be rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over McMillan in view of U.S. Patent 6,237,099 (Kurokawa), and

whether claims 3 and 22 should be rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over McMillan in view of U.S. Patent 6,243,722 (Day).

ARGUMENT

1. Arguments against rejection under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by US patent 6,789,105 (McMillan).

Claim 1 recites a server computer sends a document file to a receiver/client computer which displays an image of the document described by the document file, and then returns verification data to the server indicating that it has successfully displayed the image.

The Examiner cites McMillan as anticipating claim 1, but McMillan does not teach step c of claim 1, providing software in the receiver/client computer that displays the image and then sends

verification data to the server indicating that it has successfully displayed the image. Note two particular limitations of step c of claim 1:

1. Viewer software in the receiver computer sends the verification data to the server computer, and
2. The viewer software sends the verification data to indicate it has successfully displayed the image.

The fact that a server sends a document file to a receiver computer does not necessarily mean that the receiver has successfully received the file and displayed an image of the document. McMillan teaches only that a server should log verification that a server sent a document to a receiver. Verifying that the receiver successively displayed a document is advantageous over verifying only that a document was sent to a receiver, and such display verification is not taught or suggested in by McMillan.

McMillan teaches a document server that receives and responds to HTTP GET requests for document files from receiver (client) computers. An HTTP GET request is usually sent from a client computer to a server computer when a client clicks on a hypertext link referencing the URL address of a document stored on the server computer. At paragraph 26 of the final office action, the Examiner correctly points out that an inherent feature of any HTTP GET request from a receiver computer to a server is a return address which indicates where the server is to route a document referenced by the HTTP address. However, the Examiner incorrectly argues that an HTTP GET request verifies that the receiver has successfully displayed the document. The reason this isn't true is important to understanding the applicant's invention. Since the HTTP request is sent before the receiver computer has received or displayed the document, it cannot serve as an acknowledgment that it has successfully displayed the document. Nor does the fact that the server transmits a document file to the receiver computer in response to an HTTP GET request necessarily mean that the receiver computer actually received the document file and displayed the document. For example, the document file may have been lost or corrupted in transit, or the receiver computer may have been unable to display the document. In order for a receiver computer to

send an acknowledgement to a server computer that it has successfully displayed an image of a document described by a document file, it has to display the document before sending the acknowledgement. Claim 1 recites that the receiver sends verification data after it has successfully displayed the document. McMillan does not teach that.

McMillan teaches a complex document delivery system including several servers that not only send emails and files to client computers, but also send emails, files and various other types of data transmissions to one another. To determine whether any of the data transmissions McMillan discusses anticipates step c of claim 1 (viewer software in a receiver (client) computer sending verification to a server computer that it has successfully displayed a document), it is important to keep track of which computer sends each data transmission, which computer receives it, what information each transmission conveys, and the point in the document delivery process at which the transmission is sent.

As shown in McMillan's FIG. 17, McMillan's system includes several server computers 12-15 and each server computer 12-15 has a different responsibility. Server 12 sends out emails to client computers 25. Server computer 13 sends out content files to client computers 25 when the client computers open the emails. Server computer 14 provides "reporting information" on email and content distributions to server 15. Server 15 is a database server for storing information regarding customer requirements and specifications for email and content distributions. Though not shown in FIG. 17, there is also a "content creator" server that creates emails and other files (see col. 7, lines 4-10) and forwards them to other servers.

McMillan's system creates an email including a link to a content file. When an email server 12 sends the email to a receiver (client) computer 25, and a client computer user opens the email, the email automatically sends an HTTP GET request for the content file to a content server 13 which forwards the file to the client computer. McMillan's servers 14 and 15 also log various events related to the process. FIG. 1 shows an overview of the process taught by McMillan. Content files (which could be document files) are prepared at step 200. At step 300 the emails are created and sent, and the content is sent to the content server. The content is sent to the receivers and tracked at step 400.

McMillan's FIG. 3 illustrates the distribution step 300 as including a step 310 (detailed in FIG. 9) in which the content creates the emails and package the content in a form to be sent to the client computers 25. At step 320 (detailed in FIG. 10) the content creator (a server) sends the content files to the content server 13. At step 330 (detailed in FIG. 11) the Email server 12 sends out the emails to the client computers. The emails can be designed so that the content files (which are stored on server 13) are linked to the emails, so that the server 13 will send the content files to the client computer when the client computer user opens an email (col. 7, line 59...col. 8, line 2), the client computer can display or play the content of the content files. At step 340 (detailed in FIG. 12) email server 12 tells the content server 13 that the emails have been sent so that the content server can prepare to respond to requests for the content files from the client computers. Server 12 also tells database server 15 that it has sent out the emails. Thus by the end of step 300 of FIG. 1, the emails have been created and sent to the client computers 25, the content has been created and sent to the content server 13, and the content server 13 and database server 15 have been notified that the emails have been sent.

McMillan's FIG. 4 details the next step 400 of FIG. 4 (detailed in FIG. 13) wherein content files are sent and a reporting server 14 "logs all functions of the content server (13) and the e-mail server (12)" (col. 9-lines 15-19) and supplies the data it generates to reporting engine on the content server 13, which generates reports of system activity based on that information.

The Examiner suggests that FIG. 12 (step 340 of the process) shows that the client (receiver) computer 25 returns verification data to a server computer that it has successfully displayed a document image as recited in claim 1, step c. However at step 340, one server computer (email server 12) tells other server computers (content server 13 and database server 15) that it has sent emails to the client computers. See col. lines 49-52. Step 340 thus relates to one server reporting on its email sending activities to other servers and does not relate to a client/receiver computer reporting on its document display activities to a server computer. Thus claim 1, step c, does not read on McMillan's FIG. 12, step 340 because in McMillan's step 340.

a. A server rather than a receiver is sending the transmission,
b. The transmission indicates the server has sent email, and does not indicate a receiver has successfully displayed an image described by a document file as recited in claim 1, and
c. The transmission occurs before the content (document) file is sent to the receiver and provides no indication as to whether the receiver actually received either the email or the content file and displayed a document described either of those files.

At paragraph 3(c) of the final office action the Examiner suggests that McMillan (col. 8, line 49 to col. 8, line 51) teaches the client (receiver) computer 25 returns a verification to a server computer that it has successfully displayed a document image as recited in claim 1, step c.

The first part (col. 8, line 49 through col. 9, line 5) of the cited section describes FIG. 12 (step 340 of the process), which as discussed above, does not relate to the content of claim 1, step c. A second part (col. 9, lines 6-52) of the cited section of McMillan describes McMillan's FIG. 4, which depicts the "content tracking" step 400 of FIG. 1, detailed in FIGs. 13-16. In particular, col. 9, lines 15-52 of McMillan discusses McMillan's FIG. 13 detailing a substep 410 of the content tracking step 400. The Examiner apparently concludes that the applicant's claim 1, step c, occurs as a part of substep 410 of step 400. To determine whether this characterization of substep 410 is correct, it is necessary to review McMillan's discussion of each substep 411-418 of step 410 shown in FIG. 13 to determine whether in any of those steps a client/receiver computer sends an acknowledgement to any one of the server computers indicating that it has successfully displayed an image of a document described by a server computer.

At step 411, a server program is activated (col. 9, lines 15-26) which, at steps 412 and 413, logs ten pieces of information on the content server 13 and the database server 15. Those ten pieces of information, listed in col. 9, lines 20-26 as items (a) through (j), do not include an acknowledgment from a client computer 25 that it has successfully displayed an image of a document described by a content file. Thus claim 1, step (c) does not read on steps 411-413.

At step 414, "the reporting server 14 recognizes the starting of the servant engine," which is a program (a "servlet") running on the content server 13 for delivering content files to client computer when requested (col. 9, lines 29-37). Thus step 414 relates to a server logging the start of a program on a server and does not relate to logging an acknowledgment from a client computer 25 that it has successfully displayed an image of a document described by a content file it has received. Thus claim 1, step (c) does not read on step 414.

At steps 415 and 416, "the content serving and e-mailing processes are then continually monitored" and any anomalies are reported to a "watch" program. (col. 9, lines 42). Since steps 415 and 416 relates to monitoring and logging activities of content and e-mail servers and do not relate to logging an acknowledgment from a client computer 25 that it has successfully displayed an image of a document described by a content file, claim 1, step (c) does not read on steps 415 and 416..

At steps 417 and 418, a counter counts the number of requests for a content file and logs the information on database server 15. Since steps 417 and 418 relate to monitoring and logging the number of requests for a content file (which occur before, and not after a content file is received and displayed) and do not relate to logging an acknowledgment from a client computer 25 that it has successfully displayed an image of a document described by a content file, claim 1, step (c) does not read on steps 417 and 418..

Thus while paragraph 3 (c) of the final office action suggests that McMillan (FIG. 12 and col. 8, line 49 to col. 8, line 51) teaches the client (receiver) computer 25 returns a verification to a server computer that it has successfully displayed a document image as recited in claim 1, step c, a close review of the cited sections of McMillan shows that they do not.

At paragraph 23 of the final office action, the Examiner cites McMillan's FIGs 6, 9, and 16, and col. 10, line 55 through col. 11, line 15 as also teaching the subject matter of claim 1, step (c).

FIG. 6 details step 220 of FIG. 2, which in turn details step 200 of FIG. 1. Thus FIG. 6 relates to a part of content preparation step 200 of McMillan's process that occurs before a content file is sent to a client computer. Since claim 1, step (c) relates to sending

an acknowledgement that a document image is printed after a content/document file is sent to a client/receiver computer, the act recited in claim 1 step (c) cannot occur during step 220 of FIG. 6. The Examiner correctly observes that "servlets" (also called "servants") are created at step 220, and that the activities of the servants are then monitored. However the servlets/servants, which send the emails and content to the client computers, run on a server computer and not on the client computer. See col. 5, lines 7-20. The fact that activities of software running on servers may be monitored is irrelevant to claim 1 step (c) which relates to monitoring activities of software running on a client/receiver computer.

FIG. 9 details step 310 of McMillan's FIG. 3 wherein) the content creator packages the content and emails in a form to be sent to the client computers 25. Clearly FIG. 9 cannot itself teach the content of claim 1, step (c) because it talks about something that occurs before content/document files are sent to the client/receiver computers. The Examiner correctly cites FIG. 9 as teaching the about servlets (col. 7, lines 37-50), but this sections says the servlets are received and run on server computers, not on the client/receiver computers. The fact that activities of these servlets may be subsequently monitored is irrelevant to claim 1, step (c) because claim 1, step (c) relates to information that software running on a client/receiver computer sends to a server indicating what the receiver has done, and not to information that a servlet running on a server computer sends to another server computer to indicate what it has done.

FIG. 16 and col. 10, line 55 though col. 1, line 15 detail step 440 of McMillan's FIG. 4 which is a part of the "track content" step 400 of FIG. 1. A session manager is started at step 441 when it receives notification from a server that an email is sent. At steps 442 and 443 the client computer sends a request for a content (document) file, which clearly occurs before an image of the document can be displayed. At step 444, the content server checks to determine whether the number of requests for the content file has exceeded a limit, and if not, sends the content to the client at step 445. At step 446 data about the content transmission is logged. McMillan teaches this data includes bytes in, bytes out, and other information described at col. 9, lines 20-25. None of the logged data includes an

acknowledgement from the client computer that it has successfully displayed an image of a document described by the content file as recited in claim 1, step c. All of the logged information relates to activities of servers, not clients. A server checks a session timer at step 447. At steps 448 and 449, all of the requests for content files are logged on the content server, and at step 450 the database server is updated. Thus the process depicted in FIG. 15 does not include providing a client/receiver computer with software that sends an acknowledgement to a server when it has successfully displayed an image of a document described by a document/content file as recited in claim 1, step c.

Claims 2, 4-8, 13-17 and 21 patentable over McMillan for reasons similar to those expressed above with respect to claim 1.

2. Claims 9, 10 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over McMillan in view of US patent 6,209,030 (Ohashi).

The Examiner cites McMillan as teaching the subject matter of the parent claims 1 or 14, of claims 9, 10 and 20, but as discussed above in connection with claim 1, McMillan does not teach the subject matter of claim 1.

Claim 9 further recites that the document file is a print file and that a publication request send by a sender computer indicates a receiver computer is to be prevented from sending a print file it receives from a server to a printer. Nothing in either McMillan or Ohashi mentions or suggests anything about a server sending a publication request indicating that a particular receiver computer is to be prevented from sending a document file to a printer.

The Examiner cites Ohashi (Abstract) as disclosing a mechanism by which a receiver computer is prevented from performing a print screen operation when displaying an image of document in a browser, however a print screen operation and sending a document file to a printer are two different activities.

In a print screen operation, an image of whatever is displayed on a screen is printed. Though a receiver computer may display all or a portion of a document described by a document file (such as an html file) on a screen, a print screen command does not send the document file itself to the printer. A print screen command creates a new print file describing only what appears on the screen on a

pixel-by-pixel basis and then sends that new print file to the printer. Assume, as contemplated by Ohashi, a browser running on a computer is generating an image of a document such as a web page described by a document file such as an HTML file. A computer generates a display of the browser window and as much of the document as can fit in the window as an array of pixels on a display monitor. In a print screen operation, the computer creates another file that indicates in a language the printer can understand, the position, intensity and color of each pixel, and sends that file to the printer causing the printer to as nearly as possible print an image of what appears on the screen. What is printed will only be a part of a document if not all of the document is currently displayed in the browser window, and will include things other than the document that may also be displayed on the screen, such as the window frame of the browser and any other items that happen to be displayed on the screen. Note that when carrying out a print screen operation while displaying a part or all of a document described by a document file, the computer does not send the document file itself to the printer and does not even consult the document file. It only creates a new file based on the current state of the display and sends that to the printer. Thus preventing a computer from carrying out a print screen operation does not mean that the computer is prevented from forwarding to a printer a document file it has received from a server, when that document file happens to be formatted as a print file.

Document delivery systems normally transmit documents files in a form which cannot be directly understood by a printer such as a word processing, a graphics or HTML file. Software in a receiving computer must first convert the document file into a print file that the printer can understand, and then send the print file to the printer. The printer then prints an image of the entire document and nothing else. In accordance with the applicant's document delivery method as recited in claims 9 and 10, a sender transmits a print file via a server to a receiver, and view software generates a display based on the print file. In accordance with claims 9 and 10, the document sender can provide a publication request indicating that the receiver computer is to be prevented from sending that print file to a printer.

Ohashi teaches to prevent the computer from carrying out a print screen operation when the computer is displaying an image that

includes part or all of a document described by a document file, but nothing in Ohashi teaches to prevent a computer from sending the document file itself to the printer when the document file is in the form of a print file. Ohashi does not even contemplate that the document file might itself be a print file that could be sent to a printer. Note also the programming needed to prevent a computer from carrying out a print screen operation is very much different than the programming needed to prevent a computer from forwarding to a printer a particular print file it has received from a server.

Thus in response to paragraph 27 of the Office Action, the applicant has shown that preventing a computer from carrying out a print screen operation would not also prevent the computer from printing a print file it has received from a server. Claims 9, 10 and 20 are therefore patentable over the combination of McMillan and Ohashi for reasons similar to those discussed above in connection with claim 9.

3. Claims 11, 12, 18 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over McMillan in view of U.S. patent 6,237,099 (Kurokawa).

Claims 11 and 12 depend on claim 1, and claims 18 and 19 depend on claim 14. The Examiner cites McMillan, but not Kurokawa, as disclosing the content of parent claims 1 and 14 and cites Kurokawa, but not McMillan as teaching the additional limitations of claims 11, 12, 18 and 19. Since, as discussed above in connection with claims 1 and 14, McMillan fails to teach the subject matter of claim 1 and since Kurokawa also fails to disclose the subject matter of claims 1 and 14, claims 11, 12, 18 and 19 are patentable over the combination of McMillan and Kurokawa.

4. Claims 3 and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over McMillan in view of U.S. patent 6,243,722 (Day).

Claim 3 depends on claim 1, and claim 22 depends on claim 14. The Examiner cites McMillan, but not Day, as disclosing the content of parent claims 1 and 14 and cites Day but not McMillan as teaching the additional limitations of claims 3 and 22. Since as discussed above in connection with claim 1, McMillan does not teach the subject matter of claim 1, and since Day also fails to disclose the subject matter of

claim 1, claim 3 is patentable over the combination of McMillan and Day.

CLAIMS APPENDIX

1. A method for transmitting a document file describing a document from a sender computer to a receiver computer via a computer network linking the sender computer and the receiver computer to a server computer, wherein the sender computer is operated by a sender, wherein the receiver computer is operated by a receiver, the method comprising the steps of:

- a. transmitting the document file from the sender computer to the server computer via the computer network;
- b. transmitting the document file from the server computer to the receiver computer via the computer network; and
- c. providing viewer software executed by the receiver computer for generating a display of an image of the document described by the document file when received by the receiver computer, and for thereafter automatically returning verification data to the server computer via the computer network verifying that the receiver computer has successfully displayed the document image.

2. The method in accordance with claim 1 further comprising the steps of:

- d. storing log data on the server computer indicating when the receiver computer returned the verification data to the server computer; and
- e. providing the sender computer with access to the log data via the computer network.

3. The method in accordance with claim 1 further comprising the steps of:

- d. transmitting a comment file containing comments generated by the receiver from the receiver computer to the server computer, wherein the comment file references the document file;
- e. storing the comment file on the server computer; and
- f. providing the sender computer with access to the comment file via the computer network.

4. The method in accordance with claim 1 further comprising the steps of:

- d. transmitting a publish request from the sender computer to

the server computer wherein the publish request identifies the receiver computer; and

e. prior to step b, transmitting a email message generated by the sender from the server computer to the receiver computer identified in the publish request, wherein the email message references the document file.

5. The method in accordance with claim 4 further comprising the step of:

f. prior to step e, storing the document file in the server computer and assigning a network address to the document file stored on the server computer, wherein the email message transmitted at step e includes a reference to the assigned network address.

6. The method in accordance with claim 5 wherein the reference to the assigned network address is a hypertext link included in the email message.

7. The method in accordance with claim 1 wherein step a comprises the sub-steps of:

a1. transmitting a publish request from the sender computer to the server computer, wherein the publish request identifies the receiver computer, wherein the publish request indicates that the receiver must sign on to the server computer by transmitting a user name and a user password to the server computer via the computer network in order to receive the document file; and

a2. transmitting the document file from the sender computer to the server computer via the computer network.

8. The method in accordance with claim 7 wherein step b comprises the sub-steps of:

b1. verifying that the receiver is signed on to the server computer, and

b2. thereafter transmitting the document file from the server computer to the receiver computer via the computer network.

9. The method in accordance with claim 1 wherein the document file is a print file and wherein step a comprises the sub-steps of:

a1. transmitting a publish request from the sender computer to the server computer, wherein the publish request identifies the receiver computer, wherein the publish request indicates that the receiver computer is to be prevented from sending the document file to a printer; and

a2. transmitting the document file from the sender computer to the server computer via the computer network.

10. The method in accordance with claim 9 wherein step b comprises the sub-steps of:

b1. transmitting the document file from the server computer to the receiver computer via the computer network, and

b2. preventing the receiver computer from sending the document file to the printer.

11. The method in accordance with claim 1 further comprising the steps of:

d. assigning to the document file a first password generated by the sender, and

e. prior to step b, transmitting the first password to the server computer.

12. The method in accordance with claim 11 wherein step b comprises the sub-steps of:

b1. providing a document password entry form to the receiver computer,

b2. conveying a second password entered into the document password entry form to the server computer, and

b3. transmitting the document file from the server computer to the receiver computer via the computer network when the second password matches the first password.

13. The method in accordance with claim 1 wherein the receiver computer returns the verification data to the server computer as an encoded network address.

14. A method for transmitting a document file describing a document from a sender computer to a receiver computer via a computer

network linking the sender computer and the receiver computer to a server computer, wherein the sender computer is operated by a sender, wherein the receiver computer is operated by a receiver, wherein the receiver computer includes a monitor viewable by the receiver, the method comprising the steps of:

- a. transmitting the document file via the computer network from the sender computer to the server computer;
- b. storing the document file on the server computer and assigning the document file a unique network address;
- c. transmitting an email message via the computer network to the receiver computer, wherein the email message includes a hypertext link to the document file's assigned network address;
- d. displaying the email message on the receiver computer monitor so that the receiver may view it and activate the hypertext link whereby the receiver computer returns the document file's network address to the server computer;
- e. transmitting the document file from the server computer to the receiver computer via the computer network following the receiver's activation of the hypertext link; and
- f. providing viewer software running on the receiver computer for generating a display on the receiver computer monitor of the document described by the document file when received by the receiver computer;

wherein when the viewer software has successfully displayed the document, it automatically returns verification data in the form of an encoded network address to the server computer via the computer network verifying that the document has been successfully displayed.

15. The method in accordance with claim 14 further comprising the step of:

- g. prior to step a, transmitting a publish request from the sender computer to the server computer wherein the publish request identifies the receiver computer that is to receive the email message at step c.

16. The method in accordance with claim 15 wherein the publish request transmitted in step g indicates that the receiver must sign on to the server computer by transmitting, prior to step e, a user name

and a user password to the server computer via the computer network in order to receive the document file at step e.

17. The method in accordance with claim 16 wherein step e comprises the sub-steps of:

e1. verifying that the receiver is signed on to the server computer, and

e2. thereafter transmitting the document file from the server computer to the receiver computer via the computer network following the receiver's activation of the hypertext link.

18. The method in accordance with claim 15 further comprising the steps of:

h. assigning to the document file a first password generated by the sender; and

i. prior to step b, transmitting the first password to the server computer.

19. The method in accordance with claim 18 wherein step e comprises the substeps of:

e1. providing a document password entry form to the receiver computer;

e2. conveying a second password entered into the document password entry form from the receiver computer to the server computer; and

e3. transmitting the document file from the server computer to the receiver computer via the computer network at step e only when the second password matches the first password.

20. The method in accordance with claim 15 wherein the document file is a print file and wherein the publish request indicates whether the receiver computer is to be prevented from sending the document file to a printer.

21. The method in accordance with claim 14 further comprising the steps of:

g. storing log data on the server computer indicating when the receiver computer returned the verification data to the server computer; and

h. providing the sender computer with access to the log data via the computer network.

22. The method in accordance with claim 14 further comprising the steps of:

g. transmitting a comment file containing comments generated by the receiver from the receiver computer to the server computer, wherein the comment file references the document file;

h. storing the comment file on the server computer; and

i. providing the sender computer with access to the comment file via the computer network.

EVIDENCE APPENDIX

Not applicable.

RELATED PROCEEDINGS APPENDIX

Not Applicable.

Respectfully submitted,



Daniel J. Bedell

Reg. No. 30,156

SMITH-HILL & BEDELL, P.C.
16100 N.W. Cornell Road, Suite 220
Beaverton, Oregon 97006

Tel. (503) 574-3100
Fax (503) 574-3197
Docket: SWIF 2123
Postcard: 11/05-1

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